We have already noted some positive signs since 6 April. We believe that the initial discussions between the chiefs of staff of the Government forces and the Forces nouvelles on the launching of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process took place in a positive manner. Dialogue has resumed, and it must continue and result in an effective renewal of cantonment and disarmament operations. Heavy weapons have already been withdrawn from the front line, which is tangible progress given the prevailing climate barely two months ago. In particular, President Laurent Gbagbo must very soon take a decision on President Mbeki's determination regarding the amendment of article 35 of the Constitution. That decision by Côte d'Ivoire's head of State will be decisive, and we await it with interest. We very much hope that it will make it possible to overcome one of the major obstacles once and for all. At the same time, the disarmament process must begin to go forward, which would be a clear signal that Côte d'Ivoire is once again finding its way.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the Council must today do its utmost to support the efforts of President Mbeki and to assist the Ivorian parties to succeed in making peace. What should we do? For one thing, as Mr. Pahad has just told us, the Council should continue to closely monitor respect for the commitments undertaken at Pretoria in the presence of President Mbeki. The Security Council must be vigilant, as is its role.

Secondly, in the coming days, the Council should renew the mandate of the impartial forces. My delegation will introduce a draft resolution on that matter this week. The Council must assume its responsibilities and give the United Nations a clear mandate to support the implementation of all provisions of the Pretoria Agreement. It is also essential that the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) be given all the means necessary to carry out its mission successfully. That means that, in addition to the Secretary-General's requests pertaining to security in Abidjan, strengthening ONUCI should make it possible to support the DDR programme and the holding of sound elections.

Côte d'Ivoire today has a chance to find the path towards peace and reconciliation. We must all take advantage of that opportunity. We are therefore pleased to note today the presence among us of Mr. Pierre Schori, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. We congratulate him on his appointment and are pleased to see that he has already begun his difficult task. We wish him every success in his important mission.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Mr. Pahad for his briefing, and the representative of Nigeria for the comments he made on behalf of the African Union (AU).

The Pretoria Agreement and President Mbeki's personal role in securing that Agreement are a very significant achievement that truly deserves all the congratulations of the Council. We now encourage, and expect, all the parties concerned to move forward urgently to the implementation of what has been agreed. If I may, I shall tackle the subjects by their relevant headings.

In terms of the reinforcement of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the three areas where Ivorian leaders have asked for assistance in the area of security have been set out very clearly: protecting the Forces nouvelles, police recruitment and the disarmament of the militia. I think that what we now need is a considered recommendation by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the factoring in of the previous elements. Previously, the rationale the 1,200 reinforcements was the deteriorating security situation. How do we now adjust our expectations given the Pretoria Agreement? As set out, how will the main tasks of the reinforcements influence the numbers and nature of the deployment? Indeed, how do we factor in the priorities of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and the holding of the elections? It would be good to know as much as possible, as soon as possible, about the timetable for that necessary additional deployment and about the division of roles between the two forces present in Côte d'Ivoire.

On DDR, the naming of a date for its commencement — 15 May — is very welcome. DDR is a key factor in peacebuilding anywhere, but especially in Côte d'Ivoire. It is also crucial to the implementation of the Pretoria Agreement, which is a prerequisite for the holding of free and fair elections. A worked-up plan drawing upon the expertise and experience of South Africa, but going beyond that, including time lines and objectives, is very necessary. Then, of course, the key thing is implementation.